"Anna Karenina" Held Over Second Wee... ebrities to Attend N.Y. ...heatre, N.Y., Oct. 9th

CANADI...cture DIGEST

MOVING PICTURE

Published by Canadian Moving Picture Digest Company, Limited

...dina Ave., Toronto

Vol. 27, No. 24 TORONTO 2, CANADA ...tober 5th, 1935

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Everybody's congratulating everybody else!

# BROADWAY MELODY of 1936

(See Inside Cover)

PUBLISHED BY

CANADIAN MOVING PICTURE DIGEST COMPANY LIMITED

259 SPADINA AVENUE, TORONTO 2

# AS WE GO TO PRESS!

# ORCHIDS FOR "BROADWAY MELODY of 1936"

**N. Y. Daily Mirror**

"Top-notch musical. Knockout, sure-fire, ticket-selling entertainment. The dazzling feature is the generous number of new people it brings before the camera. Each gives a great show."

**N. Y. American**

"A show to bring joy to any group of paying guests. Metro registers triumph. Creates a new star in Eleanor Powell. 1936 a memorable year for its 'Broadway Melody' "

**N. Y. Times**

"Handsome, sprightly, entertaining song and dance show. Dazzling dancing by Eleanor Powell, a likeable girl. An attractive screen personality. Picture captures intimate, joyous musical comedy abandon."

**N. Y. Daily News**

"Recaptures the entrancing spirit of the original 'Broadway Melody'. A new star lights up the screen when film introduces a bright new face and the twinklingest pair of dancing feet that has been seen on the screen since Fred Astaire made his first appearance. They both belong to Eleanor Powell. The whole production lavishly mounted."

**N. Y. Herald-Tribune**

"A lively and entertaining screen musical. Eleanor Powell emerges as a definitely likeable and gay screen personage."

**N. Y. Post**

"Has enough sure-fire ingredients to make its country-wide success a foregone conclusion."

**N. Y. Evening Journal**

"Add it all up and it spells gorgeous [illegible] tertainment. Everyone who had anyth[illegible] to do with the production can take a [illegible] deserved bow, for this is one that just[illegible] every superlative in the book."

**N. Y. Sun**

"Rousing good musical. Eleanor Po[illegible] star material. Capitol Theatre audien[illegible] watched her take her place confidd[illegible] among the screen's dancing stars."

**N. Y. World-Telegram**

"Moves along at a terrific pace. A gra[illegible] new entertainment. Beautiful, charmi[illegible] talented Miss Powell is a revelati[illegible] Something to cheer about. If this revi[illegible] smacks of superlatives blame it on 'Bro[illegible] way Melody of 1936'—it deserves [illegible] all."

**P. S. And Business everywhere is SENSATIONA[illegible]**

**English Speaking Union of U.S. Invites Many Celebrities to Attend N.Y. Premiere "Midsummer Nights' Dream" Hollywood Theatre, N.Y., Oct. 9th**


# Canadian Moving Picture DIGEST

*Established in 1915 for Exhibitors*
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RAY LEWIS
Editor and Managing Director

*Published by Canadian Moving Picture Digest Company, Limited*
**259 Spadina Ave., Toronto**

Vol. 27, No. 24 | TORONTO 2, CANADA | October 5th, 1935


## "THE MURDER ON AN OMNIBUS"

Do people want the truth? If we asked this question of a minister he would reply, "God's Truth, it is a sin to tell a lie".

If a judge were asked this question he would reply, "The truth, nothing but the truth, so help you God".

If the question was asked of a politician, and he was still interested in votes and voters, he would reply (if he were an honest politician), "The people prefer promises, white-washed lies".

If you asked your physician if he desired you to tell him the truth, he would likely reply, "Only the truth will make you well".

Ask your lawyer if you must tell him the truth, and he will tell you, "Yes, all of it, if you expect me to save your money, or your skin". Ask this question of your hostess and she will say, "My word, the truth? Yes, tell your friends, your acquaintances the truth if you wish to be ruined socially".

Someone said, "Truth is stranger than fiction", which might mean that one meets it so frequently, or in the accepted interpretation, what happens in life is stranger than the strangest story ever told.

The London morning papers recently headlined "Murder on an Omnibus". "Three Shot Dead by Jealous Husband". William Gibbs of Shutford who fired the shots, killed himself, but prior to suicide he killed his wife, Hilda May Gibbs; her sister, Miss Ivy Cora Goods; Mr. Joseph Messenger of Epwell, and also wounded Mr. William Messenger, brother of Joseph.

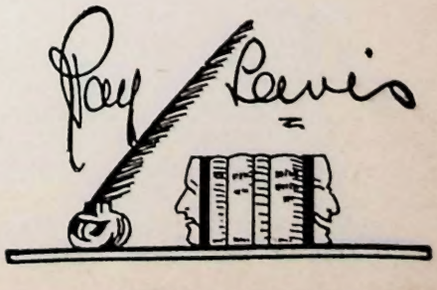
No story of the "thriller" class, adapted for the screen, could out-murder this real life-thriller. A jealous husband secures a rifle, does a little practice-shooting at a village fete, watches from an ancient monastery aperture for the return of his beautiful, but estranged wife from the village festivities; and as she and her sister alight from an omnibus, he fires two shots which kill both sisters, and kill and wound two brothers, the latter who happen to be passengers on this bus because Fate, or Accident detained them until it was too dark for them to return to their homes riding upon their bicycles without the required lights. The course of the bullets, which were aimed only at the wife, zig-zagged for a harvest of death, killing two others and wounding a third. The death of the murderer, self-inflicted, followed.

Into this "thriller" threads a story of a mad love, and a madder jealousy. Three years of married life, and then death for bride and bridegroom. Tragedy visits three homes. The home of the bride's parents, for two daughters murdered; tragedy in the home of the bridegroom for a son who killed his wife and himself; and whose death-giving bullets brought death to two others. Tragedy in the home of another family, not even remotely connected with the love-tragedy.

"The Murder on an Omnibus", if portrayed upon the Screen, would be criticized as one of the "horribles" manufactured by a distorted and depraved taste. Here it is, however, headlined in every newspaper, on all the street bulletin boards, for all ages to read.

Macbeth and Hamlet have a modern rival in the number of murders. "Murder on an Omnibus" has the lead in connection with the time-speed in which the murders were committed.

There is one consolation, no one as yet has said that "The Murder on an Omnibus" was inspired as a result of seeing "Crime Movies". And incidentally it's not American, it's all English.



# RAY PRESENTS

RAY LEWIS

I AM happy to learn that the Myrna Loy trouble is all over, and that Miss Loy returns to Leo, the Lion, who made her a star, appreciating a different and unique personality. It is too bad that our star troubles get into the press. The public today is not very sympathetic toward anyone making fifteen hundred per week, and refusing to "carry on" because they desire three thousand per week. As conditions are today very few people are living a whole year on three thousand, and even fewer people on fifteen hundred.

*Of course, Miss Loy is worth all she can get, and what M-G-M will give her. She may, judged by the standard of what others are getting, be worth even more, but Popularity, dependent upon that fickle jade called Public, should not be played around with. If there is any truth to the statement "one born every minute", meaning "a sucker", it is equally true that talented people are being born through public opportunity every minute, so one must watch their runs going up the ladder of fame.*

*Here's hoping that the trouble is indeed all over, and that no after effects will be there for you, or company. It does take a storm at times to reveal the silver lining.*

MR. SAM MORRIS, Vice President of Warner Bros. is waiting for the grand opening of the Warner Bros. Reinhardt production, "Midsummer Night's Dream", October 9th. A few privileged high brows have been permitted to catch a mat view of the picture, because they have the "sheepskin". My personal opinion is that all the professors of English, and drama lovers will come to see "Midsummer Night's Dream", anyway what we desire, by way of attendance, for this Shake-spearean dream of a picture, are the masses, but since they at times wear an ass's head, just like Bottom the Weaver, who does not know whether he is a Bottom, or an Ass, Shakespeare never drew a fine line of distinction, so we must bray like an ass to get the yokels in. The chap-cafes of professors will not jazz up the attendance.

*There is nothing high brow about "Midsummer Night's Dream". There is a romp in the story, who gets after her man, in much the same style as Leon Harlow. The story abounds with Sex Appeal, there are no less than four groups of lovers, all in the midst of each other, not overlooking the affair which "Titania", the Queen of the Fairies has with "Bottom", the Ass. As for "Puck", he is the original Puck's Bad Boy.*

I SAW a performance, trade show, I should say, of the M-G-M picture, "Here Comes The Band" with Ted Lewis and his internationally-known orchestra. What a screen personality; Virginia Bruce, Ted Healy, Donald Cook, Nat Pendleton, Spanky McFarland all combine, with additional splendid assistance, to put over an ace-high entertainment. Snap, go, bang all the time; comedy, songs, laughter, music, interest, love, what more can the customers want for their money? Pictures of this class make you feel young again, what did I say "again", I meant as young as ever; and before I forget three cheers for the director.

*Next week I am going to see, "The Bishop Misbehaves" with Maureen O'Sullivan, no, that isn't the idea, "The Bishop MisBehaves", but I do not know what he does, or if he acts with a "her"; what I do know is that Edmund Gwenn, Maureen O'Sullivan, Reginald Owen, Lucile Watson, Dudley Digges, Norman Porter are all in the cast so I assume what this bishop does. I will be there also, at the trade show, next Wednesday night, for me, but not for you, because there will be a couple of Wednesdays pass before you read this notice.*

MR. SIDNEY KENT in London, outlines an M-G-M program for the Twentieth Century Film production plans for England. Ten pictures a year will be the schedule. Mr. Kent was accompanied by Mr. Robert T. Kane, who remains in England in charge of the British film activities of this company.

The British executives of the company will in no way interfere or control the American production plans of this company. The first of the British pictures will be "Saint Joan" in which Elizabeth Bergner is to be starred, directed by Paul Czinner.

*Shirley Temple has made a great hit with the London fans in her latest, "Curly Top". England is very keen about Shirley Temple and she ranks up at the top of the class with the big stars in popularity.*

*"Lulu" the story which won the Pulitzer prize for Miss de la Roche, Canadian, has been produced by Radio Pictures, and will have its Trade Show this coming week, London, (will have had its Trade Show, when you read this).*

*It is difficult for me to remember that there is the Atlantic Ocean between you and me; and that when Ray Presents it cannot be her present, it must be her past. It's a little deep, but think it over. Ask Gracie Allen to explain if you are in doubt.*

*Ivy Gamet who made such a huge success of "China Seas" is invited to make the first*

(Continued on page 5)

## Performing Right Fees

JUDGE PARKER'S report on the fees to be charged by the Performing Right Society has not yet been completed. Bill 58 passed by the House of Commons in April of this year provided that the P.R.S. could not sue with regard to any infringement of their rights until Judge Parker's report is received by the Secretary of State and action taken thereon. This stay of proceedings was to be effective for six months. Recently the Secretary of State extended this restricted period until November.

Solicitors for various exhibitors have advised that where an exhibitor is under contract to pay fees he must pay them and conform to the conditions of his contract. If an exhibitor pays either the old fees or the new fees at the present time he should pay them with the distinct understanding in writing with the Performing Right Society that if the fees are increased above the amount paid that the exhibitor will pay the extra amount, and if the fees are lowered the P.R.S. will credit the exhibitor with all amounts over-paid.

It is recommended that any exhibitor making payments at the present time should make them subject to any decision regarding rates made by the Secretary of State at Ottawa after Judge Parker's report has been received. It is quite clear that if there is a disagreement between an exhibitor and the Canadian P.R.S. no action can be started by the latter until the matter of rates has been decided at Ottawa.

## Nanking, China, Has First Air Conditioning System

Can you imagine a Chinese version of "Kid Millions", with the initable Eddie Cantor in the leading role? Or Dick Powell, giving a melodious — but Chinese— rendition of his personality in "Gold Diggers of 1935", or "Flirtation Walk"? Or Robert Donat and Elissa Landi interpreting the gay antics of the Count of Monte Cristo to the natives of the Land of the Rising Sun?

There are but a few of the outstanding cinema treats which are planned for the enjoyment of patrons of the New Capitol Theatre, which was recently completed, and dedicated with appropriate ceremonies, in Nanking, capital city of China.

This new and ultra-modern cinema theatre has the distinction of being the first motion picture house in the city of Nanking to be equipped with an air conditioning system. This system was furnished and installed by the York Shipley, Ltd., the Shanghai Branch of the York Ice Machinery Corporation.

The latest type of electrical sound-producing and amplifying equipment is included, and the walls of the theatre are specially constructed and insulated to absorb overtones and echoes, so that the theatre conforms in this respect to Broadway's most completely equipped playhouse.

## New Theatre for Queen West

Kaplan and Sprachman, architects, are preparing plans for the construction of a new picture theatre on the south side of Queen Street West, between Bay and York Streets. Application has been made for a wrecking permit of the two buildings extending from 85 to 97 Queen Street, West, and for excavation for the new building.

The operators of the new building will be the Casino Theatre Toronto Limited. Estimated cost of building and equipment is placed at $100,000, seating capacity to be 1,200.

## Clarence Brown Explains "Ah Wilderness" Title

What's in a title?

Probably the most discussed title today is that of Eugene O'Neill's drama "Ah Wilderness", now being filmed at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios. Hundreds of letters have poured in, asking its meaning. The same was true during the play.

Clarence Brown, directing the picture, with Wallace Beery, Lionel Barrymore and an elaborate cast, explains:

"O'Neill took the title," he says, "from a verse of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. The story is one of adolescent love — a boy and a girl in the first love of their youth.

"The verse in question is the last two lines in the 'A Book of Verses Underneath the Bough' quatrain — 'And thou, singing beside me in the wilderness. Ah Wilderness were Paradise enow!'"

## Ray Presents

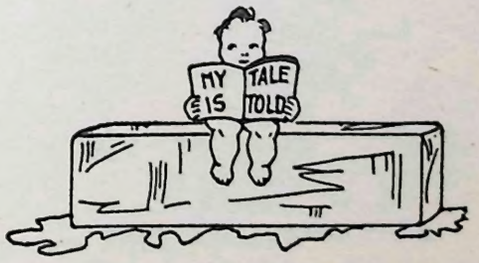
(Continued from page 4)

*English-Speaking picture in the Bombay studios, India, recently erected.*

*The Maharajah of Kohlapur, India, one of India's wealthiest potentates, interested in motion pictures, gave the invitation.*

WHICH reminds me that one of the sons, not yet twenty, an Oxford graduate, of the Governor-General Elect of Canada, Lord Tweedsmuir, (John Buchan) has become associated with Alfred Hitchcock, at the Gaumont-British Studios, Shepherd's Bush, for the purpose of studying film direction. In London, Society is in Motion Pictures.

*I saw Walter Huston doing the Death Scene of "Rhodes", at Shepherd's Bush, London. What a great scene, directed by Berthold Vietel, who directed, "Little Friend". There is no use talking, there is something nice about Canadians. Walter Huston tells me he just played "Dodsworth", in Toronto, and asked me to give my regards to King and Yonge Streets. Talking about "nice Canadians", Huston is going to make a great "Rhodes", but then these Canadians when they are clever, how clever they are. For instance, just remember Norma Shearer, and never forget Marie Dressler, and remember Mary Pickford, and Fifi Dorsay, but another boat to catch, some more next week.*




**Theatre Fans London, Eng. Crowd Theatres to View Baer-Louis Fight Pictures**

# Ray Lewis Reviews and News

ERNEST FREDMAN of the Daily Film Renter has a page which he calls, "Wardour Street Gossip—by Tatler". It is breezy, witty, informative, easy to read and friendly.

Your editor has observed that Ernest is always out having tea, lunch or some other form of bodily sustenance with celebrities and magnates of the Screen. It looks as if he is not obliged to work at all for that part of his living which makes up the festive board, or the wine of life.

I have been reading his column daily, and note that it is impossible for me to keep up with his social activities. It has led me to believe that perhaps it has been impolite of me not to mention the teas, lunches and dinners which the delightful hosts of this Industry of Motion Pictures extended to me while I was in Hollywood recently.

Now, Fredman is a very clever publisher, and his habit of mentioning cocktails, lunches, teas etc., may be the right thing to do, they always know the right thing to do in England. Perhaps I should have mentioned the many times I had lunch at the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer studios at Hollywod, and a special lunch with Mr. Louis Mayer; lunches at Universal City, and with Mr. Carl Laemmle, lunches at the Fox studio, the RKO studio where I met stars, directors, producers. Lunch with Clarence Brown, who was directing Greta Garbo in one of her best pictures, namely "Anna Karenina" of which I have already told you.

A special lunch given for me by Mrs. Lola Adams Gentry, and at which I met the women who do things in Southern California. A champagne cocktail with Mary Pickford, and lunch with Mr. and Mrs. Michael Balcon. I hope that I have not forgotten my long list of hosts and hostesses; and if I have I know that they will understand that I have a most delightful memory of their hospitality.

AND now, London, England, lunch with Mr. Francis Meynell of United Artists, journalist and now Big Chief for this company in England. A delightful conversationalist and how much he knows which should be known of our business. I was so interested in what he had to say that I did not think of mentioning the lunch previously. Of course, I am not doing it in Fredman's easy style, he just mentions it as nonchalantly as if he were lighting a Murad.

Lunch with Anna Neagle, and Herbert Wilcox, who told me all about the plans of teaming Anna Neagle and Sir Cedric Hardwicke in a series of pictures; and of the plans to produce Anna Hathaway and William Shakespeare. It was new "news" and I promised not to tell, even for a "scoop"; and since I am the woman who can keep a secret, you are learning about it after Mr. Wilcox has given it to the general press.

Anna Neagle, you will love her in "Peg of Old Drury", you will love her Dublin brogue, which she has acquired from the Irish players, during the filming of the picture in Dublin. You will agree with me that Sir Cedric Hardwicke does the best work of his career as "David Garrick".

The story has been built up along the lines so successfully introduced in Grace Moore's "One Night of Love", save that Sir Cedric does not sing famous arias, but in scenes from "The Merchant of Venice", "Johnson's Apothecary", and "Richard III" you have dramatic moments which have been made famous in stage history, by famous actors. It is a brilliant idea and works beautifully into the story, also giving Sir Cedric an opportunity to register an individual hit.

Anna Neagle as "Peg of Old Drury" impersonates Peg Woffington ideally. The part was made for her. Her scene from "As You Like It" is an excellent bit, her song, her comedy scenes, her emotional moments make "Peg of Old Drury" a part which all great artists crave for an opportunity to play.

THE story has the love interest between "David Garrick" and "Peg". Also Peg's tragic love for "Michael", of Dublin, who lets her down. The handling of the love interest is censor-proof, but passionately appealing. It is box-office made to order; and how the lovers of the Irish Players in America will love the Irish Players in the cast, and Peg's softly musical brogue.

It should prove more popular than "Henry VIII", for it has about it the vivaciousness and rollicking spirit of "Sunshine Susie".

Herbert Wilcox has made a magnificent production, which looks like money in its Quality, and looks like money from the Cash Customers who pay to be Entertained. It is one of the Best of the British Pictures and some of the Best have already established a high standard of Quality.

But, I was talking about lunches, teas, etc., food for the body and not Showman's food. Lunch with Michael Balcon, the "Mickey" of Gaumont-British Gainsborough fame, and with Alfred Hitchcock. I wish I could keep my mind on the food, but I had just come from watching Walter Huston do the "death scene" in "Rhodes", directed by Berthold Veitel, who made such a splendid picture with Nova Pilbeam in "The Little Friend". I am not going to tell you about "Rhodes" because it is a wonderful story on its own; and I must keep to food, following the inspiration which Fredman gave me. But I do not want to say that Alfred Hitchcock talks less about himself than any director I have ever met. After you see "39 Steps" you will understand that if he talked a great deal, he would have the right, he made a fine picture of "39 Steps" which is repeating its London success in the United States.

COCKTAILS and supper with Richard Tauber, star of "Heart's Desire", a big BIP, the best this company has ever made in my opinion. I had my picture taken with Tauber and Arthur Dent, and Mr. Dent and I had an opportunity to laugh over the alleged "wheat threat".

I am getting away again from the food, so must relate that I had tea with Mr. and Mrs. N. L. Nathanson, in their apartment at Dorchester House, and there met Mr. and Mrs. Felner, you know Felner of "Sunshine Susie" and other equally successful pictures' fame.

Lunch with Mr. Atkinson of "The Era", a weekly publication covering Screen, Drama, Music, Radio, etc., etc., all the field of Amusement. Mr. Atkinson is among the screen veterans in Journalism and we talked over ye good olde days, of an Infant British Film Industry.

Tea with Mr. Andrew Holt, in which we talked on everything headlined in the London papers; you can depend upon it, that it was an interesting interview.

(Continued on page 7)

**Beverley Baxter, Director Public Relations Gaumont-British, Visitor in Toronto**

## New Northern Electric System for Loew's, Montreal

The first Sound Amplifying System of its kind in Canada has been installed at Loew's Theatre, Montreal, and was used during the gala performance of the Marcus Review Continental which was featured on the bill to commemorate the re-opening of this famous home of high-class vaudeville.

We quote from the Montreal Standard:

"The new and unique system has been designed and installed by the Northern Electric Company, whose sound engineers have recently been engaged in exhaustive acoustice readings of the Auditorium, using an array of queer looking instruments by which they read the varying sound values in all parts of the house, much the same as an illuminating engineer would read the density of light from a given location at varying points about a room. Basing their calculation upon the result of these exhaustive tests they designed the special Public Address System so as to cover equally every seat in the house.

"In order that the sound emanating from the stage might be heard, no matter where the actors or artists might be at any given moment, a number of supersensitive microphones have been installed about the stage, as well as a portable one for use with piano, etc., on the stage, and another to pick up the music of the strings in the orchestra.

"Voices and music together with incidental sounds, which are picked up by these microphones, are conducted, by wires, to a "mixer" panel where they are blended by special filter equipment to produce pleasing harmony, which is reproduced and projected into the Auditorium by the loudspeakers concealed near the front of the stage.

"Mr. Gene Curtis, who is no stranger to Montreal, having been associated in a managerial way with Capitol and Palace previously, will captain the destinies of Loew's theatre, and no more able Captain could have been chosen, as Mr. Curtis will ever work with one object in view and that is to please patrons of the theatre and the general public of Montreal."

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## Brooklyn Fox Gets "The 39 Steps" British Gaumont Production

"The 39 Steps", spy thriller co-starring Robert Donat and Madeleine Carroll, which just completed a record-breaking-run at the Roxy Theatre, New York, opened at the Brooklyn Fox, Friday, October 4th.

"The 39 Steps" is based on the popular novel of the same name by Col. John Buchan, Governor General Designate of Canada. It was directed by Alfred Hitchcock, who scored a triumph with "The Man Who Knew Too Much." A fast-moving melodrama centred about the activities of a spy ring, it reaches a sensational climax in a London music hall. The supporting cast includes Peggy Ashcroft, Godfrey Tearle, Lucie Mannheim, and John Laurie.

"The 39 Steps" opens at the Uptown, Toronto, sometime this month.

## Ontario Periodicals Comment on Amusement Tax

THE removal of the Ontario Amusement Tax on admissions not exceeding 25c sold to children under 16 years of age still leaves a heavy and unpopular burden upon the working classes throughout the Province and the demand for general revision of the tax upon the lower priced tickets continues unabated on all sides, according to W. M. Gladish, Secretary-Manager of the Allied Sports and Amusement Association, Toronto.

Commenting upon the recent exempting of juvenile admissions, the Hamilton Herald declares: "Even more welcome, however, would be a decision to revise the whole system of amusement taxation and to establish it on an equitable basis. Patrons of the cheaper theatres, the neighborhood houses, pay a much higher tax, proportionately, than do persons who go to the more expensive entertainments. The brunt of the levy falls on those who can least affort it."

The Owen Sound Sun-Times says, in part: "It is the belief of many that the Premier might have gone a step further and remove the tax on all admissions of 25 cents and under and, if it is found necessary, to increase the levy in the higher brackets . . . Everyone is thankful to the Premier for removing the tax on children's admissions and are hopeful that the further step will be made."

The Advance of Niagara-on-the-Lake declares: "People still attend games and shows but when they attended perhaps two or three times a week, they attend now only once. The government would, of course, note an increase in amusement tax revenues at first but it will find before long the amount will drop as many of the sources dry up. Where a small tax might have proved profitable, a heavy tax will kill the idea."

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## Ray Lewis Reviews and News

(Continued on page 6)

Lunch with Mr. Sam Eckman, the Leo, the Lion representative in England. Ask a question about Film Business in England and you are told, "Ask Sam Eckman, he knows everything". He didn't tell me half of what he knows. He did say that Laurel and Hardy were funnier than ever in "Bonnie Scotland," and when I saw the Trade Show, I agreed with him, it even made Sam Morris, in London, with Warner Bros., Reinhardt production, of "Midsummer Night's Dream" which is said to be the superlative in picture production, it even made Sam Morris laugh; and pictures are not so funny to Sam.

ALFRED HOLT was having a good time also, you see I noticed all the "big shots" between my own laughs. Incidentally I found out where the word "Big Shot" came from, it is English, and is considered good English, it refers to the "Shots" who indulge in "getting their game" during the hunting season. For instance, "Among the shots who were there was the Duke of So and So." Can you imagine I thought the word meant "Gangsters", the kind who are responsible for the formation of the "G Men" in the United States. As dear old Will Rogers would say, "She don't know nothin' ".

**60% M-G-M Shorts 1935-36 Now in Production**

# Dear Old London

*(Special to The Digest from our London correspondent, Dennison Thornton)*

BRITISH International Pictures have every reason to be proud of their new Richard Tauber film, "Heart's Desire", which was recently trade-shown here with tremendous success. Both your Editor and present correspondent, who witnessed the screening together, were of the opinion that it is the best picture B.I.P. have ever made. If it doesn't beat the records previous put up by "Blossom Time" and even "One Night of Love" I shall be very surprised.

The story is slight, pleasant, incidental. The music and Tauber's glorious singing are everything. The great tenor has never been heard to better advantage. He sings Schubert, Schumann and some songs of his own composition. Indeed there is something for every taste in this wholly engaging production. It has been produced and directed with a lavish and expert hand.

Following the screening Tauber made a personal appearance and sang to the audience for over half an hour. I have never seen such enthusiasm in any audience.

To celebrate the occasion B.I.P. threw a grand party after the show when those present had a chance of meeting Tauber, the members of the cast, Mr. John Maxwell and Mr. Arthur Dent.

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Mr. N. L. Nathanson, chief of Regal and Empire Films of Canada, is the power behind British Lion's present scheme of expansion involving bigger production and distribution activities. For many years British Lion, under the shrewd direction of Mr. Sam Smith, have been turning out a series of extremely competent and entertaining little pictures. With the entry of Mr. Nathanson on the scene the company is preparing for a strong "attack" on the world market with big names and stories. To back up its own product, B.L. will distribute throughout Great Britain the entire output of Republic Pictures during the next four years. This Republic franchise was secured by Mr. Smith on his recent trip to the United States and Canada, made, I understand, on the recommendation of Mr. Nathanson. Regal Films may look forward with confidence to British Lion's future product.

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### *"Peg of Old Drury"*

IN "Peg of Old Drury" British and Dominions have produced what looks like being the English picture of the year. From a production and acting standpoint it comes pretty near to rivalling "Henry VIII". As entertainment it is first-rate stuff. The fact that it has been bought for distribution in the United States at a figure that exceeds its production cost should convey some idea of its potentialities.

One can have nothing but the highest praise for the work of Anna Neagle in the title role. Equipped with a delicious Irish brogue she skips lightly trough the film dispensing gaiety, laughter and roguish fun. As a screen personality she plonks herself solidly and firmly on the map of world stardom.

Equally fine is Cedric Hardwicke's superb portrait of David Garrick. The brief Drury Lane sequences in which he presents Shylock, Richard III and the buffoon of "The Alchemist" are alone worth the price of admission.

To me, however, the biggest bouquet goes to Herbert Wilcox for as grand a job of direction as I have seen in a long, long time. For many years now Wilcox has been producing pictures over here with a calm perseverance that has finally reaped its reward. For some unfathomable reason none of his earlier films eve seemed to hit the mark, and on one or two occasions I have had harsh things to say about his work. Then came "Nell Gwynn" which pushed up his directorial stock several points. "Peg of Old Drury" sends it skyrocketing.

British and Dominions deserve a big world success with this picture — and they will get it, too!

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### *Production Activities at B.I.P.*

CAPITOL FILMS, who made "Abdul the Damned" in conjunction with B.I.P., have joined forces with C. M. Wolfe, and announce one of the most ambitious production schedules ever planned here. Pictures will be made at the British and Dominions studios, and stars already lined up include Richard Tauber, Ann Harding, Nils Asther, Jack Buchanan, Tom Walls, Ralph Lynn, Clive Brook, Anna Neagle, Helen Vinson and Fay Wray. Directors signed include Alfred Werker who made "The House of Rothschild", Karl Grune and Jack Raymond.

First picture will be "Nuptials of Corbal", story of the French revolution with Nils Asther and to be directed by Grune. This will be followed by a musical version of the stage success, "When Knights Were Bold" with Jack Buchanan starred and Fay Wray featured, and after that Richard Tauber will appear in "Pagliacci".

Other pictures will include "His Majesty's Pyjamas" with Clive Brook and Helen Vinson; "Lady of the Camelias" with Ann Harding, and "Mademoiselle Docteur", a spy story, with Dito Parlo.

In conjunction with a French company Capitol Films will make "Koenigsmark" starring Elissa Landi, Pierre Fresnay and John Lodge. A second Ann Harding picture, "Wheat", will follow. There will also be other productions with Jack Buchanan, Anna Neagle, Tom Walls and Ralph Lynn.

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### *Paramount to Erect Studios*

I UNDERSTAND there is a possibility of Paramount erecting their own studios over here, and that John Otterson, new Paramount chief, is London-bound to discuss the scheme. Up to now Paramount have been hiring floor space from British & Dominions for their quota work, but from what I gather it is Otterson's plan to produce here really seriously, and on a big scale.

Warners-First National are already lining-up an important schedule of production in this country and for this purpose are erecting two big studios at Teddington. First of their new product will be "Man of the Moment" co-starring Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Laura La Plante.

Fox British are also taking their quota efforts more seriously. A vast improvement is evident in their latest product compared to the flatulent stuff they were putting on the market last year.

But despite all this improvement in the quota standard, there is still a lot of "quickie" muck doing the rounds. Most of it never sees the light of West End representation but is packed off to cheap theatres in the suburbs and provincial towns. And believe me the provincials have to swallow some pretty awful hog-swill.

## Warner Bros. Sign Up Well-Known Duncan Sisters